

March 9, 1962

**The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.**

Dear Mr. President,

May I commend you for the support given in your Health Message to some of the many health needs which my Committee has endeavored to move forward. It is particularly gratifying to note the much needed emphasis you placed on health problems associated with the environment.

I have felt for several years that this is an area which needs strengthening, and testimony from interested citizens before my Committee has reinforced my conviction.

I was especially pleased to see you direct attention to the need for a National Environmental Health Center which will house together the several related environmental programs. At present, these programs are scattered, so that it is most difficult to achieve the close relationship that I believe should exist between research, technical assistance, training and control activities that is needed. Your proposal would make this possible, both between programs and between the elements of individual programs such as those for air and water pollution control and radiation protection.

My Committee considered in fiscal year 1961, a request for funds for expansion of Public Health Service environmental facilities at Cincinnati, Ohio. These were appropriated. However, at that time a re-study of organization and mission of the Public Health Service, particularly as it related its several environmental programs, had a specific recommendation for a unified national environmental health program. These recommendations included provision for the Environmental Health Center.

A year ago, the Administration submitted a 1962 budget amendment request to the Congress for site acquisition and planning funds for such a Center in the Washington area. In my opinion, this was a sound and logical proposal and I am sorry that it did not come up with the regular appropriation request to my Committee. As you know, the appropriation did not pass.

In the intervening period, the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service convened a special advisory group of experts from outside the government to make a study of the health problems associated with environment and to make recommendations including need for facilities. This special advisory group of sixteen experts, headed by the eminent Dr. Paul Gross, President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, recommended a National Environmental Health Center to be located in the Washington area. They stressed the need for close relationship between these several programs in research, technical assistance, training and control and their elements; recommended field facilities for attention to special problems of major geographical areas; emphasized the need for greater support of research and training in the universities. In total, the Report proposed a balanced and geographically distributed program with the central focus and facilities need for its successful accomplishment.

The hearings before my Committee this year pointed up the soundness of the recommendations, and bore evidence of the upsurge of interest and need in this part of the total health program. The hearings of my Committee were completed today. I am again perturbed that the item for the National Environmental Health Center has not cleared your offices in time to reach this Committee in the regular course of its business. Because I regard this as an extremely important matter in our movement ahead against health hazards, I should be glad to consider a 1963 budget amendment if it reaches us before we sit down to mark up the bill.

With warmest personal regards,

Sincerely,

John E. Fogarty
Member of Congress